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Seldom has the historic sense of a book been more relentlessly investigated than in this commentary. It would not be impossible or unjust, however, to read more ethical content into the stories than Gunkel does. For we have not only to determine their original sense, but also to discover what sense is suggested for them by the connection in which the final redactor of the Hexateuch has placed them. Dillmann could plead the acknowledged unity of the Hexateuch in excuse for his more spiritual interpretation. Doubtless the original sense is by far the more important, but the other is neither unimportant nor illegitimate, and there are hints of such a concession in this commentary.

It is a great pleasure to welcome a commentary which combines to so extraordinary a degree information, inspiration, and literary charm.

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DIE BÜCHER DER CHRONIK. Erklärt von I. BENZINGER.
(= "Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament," herausgegeben von Karl Marti, Lieferung 14.) Tübingen:
Mohr, 1901. Pp. xviii + 141. M. 3.

THE author of this commentary regards the Chronicles as a midrash, the fullest example in the Old Testament of that method of history-telling. He objects, however, to the theory that the chronicler has invented his material, and considers that he has founded his work on written sources. The special value of Benzinger's book is the judicial spirit in which he endeavors to explain the origin of those narratives which cannot be regarded as historical, and to indicate what may have been the basis of fact. Two main sources, in addition to Samuel and Kings, are noted: (1) the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings (variously named) and (2) a History of the Prophets. Many critics regard these as identical. In these works the earlier history had already been very much worked over in the midrashic spirit. The chronicler carried the process still farther. Two examples may be cited. The expedition of Zerah the Cushite exhibits all the marks of the midrash, "fabulous hosts, edifying prayer, marvelous victory," but it is not invention. The chronicler's sources gave an account of an invasion of a Cushite tribe, doubtless from Arabia. He imagined that it meant the Cushites of Egypt, and so built up his narrative. The captivity of Manasseh in Babylon may have historical basis, either in a visit of Manasseh to pay homage after having refused

tribute in connection with the Babylonian revolt, or in an actual transportation for participation in the revolt. The repentance, however, is the mere theory of the midrashist, who sought an explanation of the wicked king's long reign.

Many other sources were also available to the chronicler, and he has preserved valuable information regarding the families of the kings, their building operations and their border wars. Whenever the religious interest is not involved, a careful study of each incident may yield historical fact. The registers (chaps. 1-9), while derived from written sources, have been extraordinarily worked over. No historical reliance can be placed upon the tribal genealogies. The descent of the high-priests from Aaron and of the singers from Samuel are quite unhistorical. The geographical lists, however, probably contain much valuable information, but the text is in very bad condition.

The date of the compilation is probably about 300 B. C., but it has received many additions. As the Levitical families enlarged and their duties became more diverse, new genealogical lists were added. There was a constant tendency to add material from the earlier and more reverenced canonical books. The chronicler was a Levitical singer, and so dwelt much upon the sacred song, but there are indications of additions by one specially interested in the instruments of music and their proper use.

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EZEKIEL AND DANIEL. By CAMDEN M. COBERN. (= "Commentary on the Old Testament," edited by Wheedon, Vol. VIII.) New York: Eaton & Mains; Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye, 1901. Pp. 415. \$2.50.

THESE comments on Ezekiel and Daniel have been written under the pressure of pastoral duty in two of the largest and most important charges in American Methodism. Great debts have been raised, large plans of institutional church work projected, and many hundreds admitted to the church on confession of faith while this work was being carried forward. . . . No one can be more sensible than the writer of the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of doing one's best critical work under the circumstances.

Thus we read as we open the book at the preface. The statement does not sound encouraging, except to those concerned with American Methodism. For those who are seeking light on Ezekiel and Daniel the apology destroys expectation. It is a matter of concern to every